

NOV -2 1921 ✓

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THE IRON TRAIL ✓

Photoplay in seven reels

✓ Based upon Rex Beach's novel of the same name

Scenario by Dorothy Farnum

Directed by R. William Neill

( Author of the photoplay (under Section 62)

Bennett Pictures Corporation of the U. S. ✓

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BENNETT PICTURES CORPORATION  
PRESENTS  
THE IRON TRAIL  
BY  
REX BEACH.

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NOV -2 1921

Direction by R.W. Neill  
Photodrama by Dorothy Farnum  
Photography by Earnest Haller.

SYNOPSIS.

Curtis Gordon had an unenviable reputation as a crooked promoter, but his suave manners made it possible for him to interest some financiers in his latest scheme, the promotion of a railroad from Cortez, up into the interior of Alaska.

He had just managed to get his proposed backers into a mellow frame of mind, when the conference was interrupted by the appearance of his wife, in a hysterical condition, gasping that the steamer, which was bringing her daughter to visit her, had been wrecked and that the life-boats were bringing in the survivors. Gordon, furious at the interruption, tried to resume his conversation as nothing had happened. The men he was addressing, horrified at his heartless manner, left him and rushed to the dock to see if they could be of any assistance to the distracted mother.

Gordon's wrathful frame of mind was not improved by the refusal of his engineer, Dan Appleton, to change his report of Gordon's survey to conform with his requirements. Gordon's explanation that the changes were necessary to induce his proposed backers to invest their money in the enterprise confirmed Dan in his suspicions that the scheme was crooked and he promptly resigned.

At the dock, Mrs Gordon found her daughter Natalie had been rescued by Murray O'Neil, an oldtime enemy of Gordon's. Many of Gordon's men had been with O'Neil in different parts of the world engaged in railroad building, and, at the sight of their old boss, they left their jobs on the chance of getting O'Neil to take them on. Dan Appleton, through Tom Slater, O'Neil's foreman, told O'Neil of his survey and his railroad route, which had been turned down by Gordon, and, O'Neil, seeing the advantages of Dan's route, immediately started to survey and construct his Iron Trail.

Gordon tried to get the Copper Trust to buy his railroad, but was dismayed to find that they regarded O'Neil's road as the only practical one. He determined to beat O'Neil and grab his right-of-way.

Natalie, in a short time, found her step-father unbearable and after a particularly harsh reprimand, she left his house to seek O'Neil, whom she looked up as the best man in the world.

Dan Appleton received word that his sister, Eliza, was coming to visit him and the town of Omar was all excitement at the prospect of her arrival.



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Natalie the same day and confided all her troubles to O'Neil who told her that she could stay with Eliza Appleton.

After the introductions were over, Eliza told O'Neil that she was in Omar under orders from Gordon to expose O'Neil's unfair methods. O'Neil, taken aback to find that the sister of his engineer was in the employ of his bitter enemy, decided that she had been stay and judge for herself.

Eliza's first initiation in railroad building came the next day. Gordon was attempting to beat O'Neil out of an important right-of-way, and O'Neil prevented him from doing so, by placing heavy charges of dynamite along the line he would follow with his surveyors, endangering the lives of Gordon and his men by exploding them as they advanced. Eliza, a horrified spectator, refused to listen to her brother's explanation of O'Neil's tactics and hastened to write a virulent attack on O'Neil.

In the days that followed, Eliza found herself changing her opinion of the big, wholesome railroad builder and her task became more and more distasteful. She could not imagine that O'Neil was the scoundrel Gordon had painted him. It was Natalie who finally opened her eyes. Discovering an article which Eliza was preparing to send to her paper, Natalie upbraided Eliza for her disloyalty to O'Neil. She gave Eliza a detailed account of Gordon's chequered career and convinced her that her own opinion of O'Neil was correct. Eliza wired to her paper to suppress her first article as she had misrepresented the facts.

In another attempt to handicap O'Neil, Gordon, hearing that he was short of money, sent a paid agitator to Omar.

Doctor Gray, O'Neil's pay-master, was unable to meet the payroll. The men, excited by the agitator, demanded their pay. Eliza, overhearing the argument, gave the doctor her savings and enabled him to pay them off. Still they were not satisfied. The agitator had told them that Gordon in Cortez was offering double pay and they had decided to leave on the next boat.

Doctor Gray, in despair, hit upon a brilliant idea. Picking out Tom Slater for the sacrifice, by copious applications of Crotan Oil, he made it appear that Tom had contracted a terrible case of smallpox. The port of Omar was placed in quarantine and the men, forced to remain in town for two weeks, went back to work and peace reigned once more.

In New York, O'Neil had gone to interest the Copper Trust in his enterprise. He received a favorable answer, but with two conditions: first, that he must complete the bridge before the spring breakup, or he would forfeit the entire railroad to the Copper Trust; secondly, that he must stop all publicity detrimental to the Trust.

The president of the Trust showed O'Neil a newspaper which made a violent attack on him. To O'Neil's astonishment, the article was signed with Eliza Appleton's name. Promising to agree to the conditions, O'Neil left for Omar.

On his return, his first ~~thought~~ thought was to get the traitor out of his camp. He found Dan at the house, and showing him the article, told him of the mischief his sister had done. Dan realized that the only thing for him to do was to leave with his sister and he felt the dishonor keenly. When he reproached Eliza with her disloyalty, Eliza told him how she had wired to have her article suppressed. The brother and sister set about packing.

O'Neil related the affair to Doctor Gray, who hastened

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to tell him of Eliza's ~~sacrifice~~ sacrifice of her savings to hold O'Neil's enterprise and save it from ruin. O'Neil, greatly delighted to find that Eliza was innocent, hurried back to house to reinstate the brother and sister and offer his humble apologies.

Gordon, in the meantime, had been busy trying to circumvent O'Neil in a different direction. In an attempt to block his track, he had flung a grade across his right-of-way and had installed a "Go-devil", a hand car heavily loaded with steel rails, which was run back and forth incessantly by means of a donkey engine and a steel cable. O'Neil, warned of the danger, arrived at the camp and soon discovered a way to dislodge Gordon.

By a clever ruse, he attracted Gordon's attention down the track while he crept round to the back of Gordon's camp, and, taking a desperate chance, slashed the cable, and sent the "Go-devil" plunging off the track. Tom Slater and Dan then rushed their men to the front and a hand-to-hand battle ensued, in which Gordon's men were forced to beat an ignominious retreat. Gordon returned to Cortez, a broken and ruined man.

Winter drew near and O'Neil was hard at work on his bridge. It was necessary for him to have his bridge completed before the Spring breakup, in order to prevent the forfeiture of his railroad to the Copper Trust. Night and day the men worked in the bitter Arctic winds, struggling for time.

Eliza had accompanied her brother to camp beside the bridge and the Appleton hut was the only home-like spot in the dreary waste. Natalie, who had returned to Cortez to care for her ailing mother, appealed to O'Neil for help. Her mother was dead and she was mortally afraid of Gordon, who had become more and more erratic. O'Neil, in spite of all that was at stake, decided that his only course was to go and fetch Natalie.

He arrived in Cortez and encountered Gordon, who attacked him in a fit of insanity. Beating him off with difficulty, O'Neil discovered that the fight had broken the last link which held Gordon to sanity and he had become hopelessly insane. He hurried Natalie away.

In the meantime, the Spring breakup had come earlier than expected, and the middle span of the bridge, still partially supported on its wooden piling, was in danger of being swept away, should the piling go out with the ice. The men had refused to continue to work on the bridge and Dan and the doctor were at their wits' ends.

Even O'Neil's presence, on his return, was not of sufficient weight to drive them back to work, and the three men, O'Neil, Dan, and the doctor determined to finish the work themselves. There only remained a few more bolts to be riveted home.

Eliza discovered that the men had deserted the bridge and seeing the difficulties the three men were contending with, courageously ran out on the bridge to give the little help she could. Just as the last piling gave way before the driving ice, the last rivet was bolted home and the bridge ~~held~~ stood firm. Murray O'Neil had won. The Copper Trust had lost their bet. The railroad was his and Eliza, who had helped him through his battle, agreed to help him through life as his wife.



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NOV -2 1921

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Bennett Pictures Corporation

THE IRON TRAIL (7 reels)

Respectfully,

FULTON BRYLAWSKI

the Bennett Pictures Corporation hereby acknowledges the receipt of two copies each of the motion picture films deposited and registered in the Copyright Office as follows:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date of Deposit</u>	<u>Registration</u>
THE IRON TRAIL	11/2/21	L: ©CL 17142

14 Copies Returned  
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Bk. D. *Ed. on Person*

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*Fulton Brylawski*

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